

## Terror in New York

The [terrorist attack in New York](#) on Tuesday confirms fears that terrorism, especially in the West, is becoming more decentralised, with individuals radicalised by terrorist ideology taking up arms on their own. Like the 'lone wolf' terrorists in [Nice](#) or [Berlin](#), who killed over 100 people last year, the New York attacker ploughed a pickup truck into a busy bicycle path in Manhattan, killing eight. Officials say Sayfullo Saipov, the 29-year-old Uzbek immigrant, was inspired by the Islamic State and wanted to inflict maximum damage. This is a unique challenge for governments. Over the last few years, Western agencies have foiled multiple terror plots. The U.S. is a case in point. It has not seen any major coordinated terror attack since September 11, 2001. But the chances of detecting and foiling a sophisticated terror plan by a network are higher than preventing a lone wolf attack. Even before the IS suffered military defeats in its core territories in West Asia, it had outsourced terror to members and sympathisers. This means that someone inspired by the IS world view and living in, say, New York or Nice doesn't have to contact IS handlers or wait for orders from Raqqa or Mosul. He or she can be both planner and executor. That is what happened in Nice, Berlin, Orlando and now New York.

Governments face both political and security challenges. The political challenge is to find the root causes of radicalisation and address them. This cannot be done without support from community members and leaders. The security challenge is to be more efficient when it comes to preventive measures. In the case of Saipov, officials say he had been planning for a year to strike civilians. He had hired a truck earlier to practise making turns and rehearsed the route where he wanted to stage the attack. Once such an attack happens, the challenge is also to prevent polarisation along religious or ethnic lines while sounding the message of unity and resolve to fight terror. Instead, President Donald Trump has grabbed the moment to assail his political rivals and drum up support for his anti-immigration policies. He has already promised to step up "extreme vetting" — even though it is unexplained how "extreme vetting" could have prevented the New York attack, or how officials could have foreseen in 2010, when Saipov entered the U.S., that he would become a threat seven years down the line. Also, Uzbekistan is not on the list of countries targeted under Mr. Trump's immigration ban. Washington needs a result-oriented plan to check radicalisation as well as prevent more terror attacks rather than ideological plans that are, in a way, helping the extremist narrative about Muslims being discriminated against and persecuted in the West.

Congress needs a cohesive agenda if it wants to push back the BJP in PM Modi's home State

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